

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently amended) A method for testing of a communication network, using a plurality of traffic agents coupled to communicate via the network under control of a testing center, the method comprising:

transmitting a sequence of data packets via the network from a first one of the traffic agents to a second one of the traffic agents, the sequence comprising both communication test packets and packets associated with an application that is accessed via the network;

recording arrival characteristics of the communication test packets and the packets associated with the application in the sequence, responsive to receiving the packets at the second traffic agent, the arrival characteristics comprising at least one of a time and order of arrival of the packets; and

observing at the testing center a difference in the arrival characteristics of the communication test packets relative to those of the packets associated with the application.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently amended) A method for testing of a computer application accessed via a communication network, using a plurality of traffic agents coupled to communicate via the network under control of a testing center, the method comprising:

running an instance of the application on a first computer coupled to the network, on which a first one of the traffic agents is also running;

exchanging test data packets via the network between a second one of the traffic agents, running on a second computer coupled to the network, and the first traffic agent, so as to determine test packet exchange characteristics generally independent of the application, the exchange characteristics comprising at least one of a packet throughput characteristic, a packet delay characteristic, a packet loss characteristic and a packet jitter characteristic;

exchanging application data packets via the network between the second computer and the instance of the application running on the first computer, so as to determine application packet exchange characteristics; and

comparing the exchange characteristics of the application data packets and test packets at the testing center.

9. (Original) A method according to claim 8, wherein running the instance of the application on the first computer comprises running an application server, and wherein exchanging the application data packets comprises transmitting application client messages from the second computer to the first computer.

10. (Original) A method according to claim 8, wherein running the instance of the application comprises running a distributed computing application on the first computer, and wherein exchanging the application data packets comprises running another instance of the application on the second computer.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 8, wherein comparing the exchange characteristics comprises comparing a delay in the exchange of application data between the first and second computers relative to the exchange of test data.

12-24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently amended) Apparatus for testing of a computer application accessed via a communication network, comprising:

a first computer, coupled to communicate via the network, and configured both to run an instance of the application and to act as a first traffic agent;

a second computer, coupled to communicate via the network with the first computer, and configured both to act as a second traffic agent so as to exchange test data packets via the network with the first traffic agent, generally independent of the application, and to exchange application data packets via the network with the instance of the application running on the first computer, so as to determine characteristics of the exchange of the test data packets and corresponding characteristics of the exchange of the application data packets, the characteristics comprising at least one of a packet throughput characteristic, a packet delay characteristic, a packet loss characteristic and a packet jitter characteristic; and

a testing center, which is coupled to communicate with the first and second computers and to receive therefrom and to compare the characteristics of the exchange of the test data packets with the characteristics of the exchange of the application data packets.

26. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the instance of the application running on the first computer comprises an application server, and wherein the second computer acts as a client of the application.

27. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the characteristics that are compared comprise a delay in the exchange of application data between the first and second computers relative to the exchange of test data.

28-35. (Canceled)

36. (Currently amended) A computer software product for testing of a computer application accessed via a communication network, the product comprising a computer-readable medium containing program instructions, which instructions, when executed by a testing center computer in communication with first and second computers via the network, wherein the first computer is also running an instance of the application, cause the testing center computer to instruct the first and second computers to exchange test data packets via the network, generally independent of the application, so as to determine test packet exchange characteristics, the characteristics comprising at least one of a packet throughput characteristic, a packet delay characteristic, a packet loss characteristic and a packet jitter characteristic, and to exchange application data packets via the network between the second computer and the instance of the application running on the first computer, so as to determine application packet exchange characteristics, and to communicate the exchange characteristics of the application data packets and test packets to the testing center computer, wherein the instructions further cause the testing center computer to compare the exchange characteristics of the application data packets and test packets.

37. (Original) A product according to claim 36, wherein the instance of the application on the first computer comprises an application server, and wherein the application data packets comprise application client messages between the second computer and the first computer.

38-39. (Canceled)